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3 killed as youths clash in Imo

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BY OUR REPORTER ON MAY 21, 2014 ·

NATIONAL



From GEORGE ONYEJIUWA,Owerri

At least three persons were allegedly shot dead yesterday when youths of Umuapu and Obitti communities in Ohaji/ Egbema council area of Imo State clashed over settlement of toll.

The clash which also left several of the youths from both communities injured, Daily Sun gathered erupted yesterday morning when youths from Umuapu community allegedly barricaded a road leading to their market which prevented people from other part of the state coming to the Orie market.

The reason for the barricade by Umuapu Youths ,it was learnt was as a result of the blunt refusal of commercial motorcyclists who were from Obitti, to pay what they called “ marching ground” money to them before granting them permission to operate.

However, when the youths of Obitti were alerted on the situation, they quickly mobilized and stormed the area to foil an attempt by Umuapu youth to stop members of the community from attending their market. This move led to a clash between the youths and at the end of rumble, three persons were confirmed dead, with many others sustaining various degrees of injuries.

Daily Sun learnt that while the Obitti youths allegedly shot dead two youths from Umuapu, Umuapu in retaliation allegedly killed a youth from Obitti communities.

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But for the quick intervention of the armed policemen and soldiers from Obinze, the clash between youths of the two neighbouring communities would have degenerated into a full blown communal war.

When contacted the Imo State Police Command Public Relation Officer (PPRO), Andrew Enwerem,(DSP) who confirmed the clash, said that no body was killed in the fracas as alleged.

He said that the clash was between two communities fighting over an access road to their market.

Meanwhile the Paramount ruler of Obitti autonomous community Eze Clifford Chibuzor, who also confirmed the fight between his community and the neighbouring Umuapu community which erupted over the blockage of road by Umuapu youths there by preventing visitors from coming to their market.

The Royal father stated that the youths of his community were angered by the unneighbourly action of the Umuapu youths who wilfully barricaded the road and in the process stopped people from coming to their market.

Although he maintained that he had instructed the youth from his community not to go to Umuapu, to avoid any clash, but that the youths were very angry over the constant harassment of the Umuapu youths, but only one of the youths was killed many sustaining serious injuries.

The monarch also disclosed that he had already sent emissaries to the traditional ruler of Umuapu autonomous community Eze Boniface Ihueze in order to resolve the matter amicably.

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